

HOUSE OF M
PRELUDE

CLAREMONT

LOPRESTI

ADAMS

EXCALIBUR

MARVEL
PSR 13

DIRECT EDITION



7 59606 05540 1

\$2.99 US \$4.25 CAN



I am Charles Xavier. I am a mutant. All my life, I have sought a way that mutants and humans might live together in peace and harmony. Hatred and fear between these two races destroyed the island-nation of Genosha and slaughtered 16 million people. From the ashes of that tragedy I hope to build a new and better world for all the Earth's children—before it's too late.

EXCALIBUR

"THE DEVIL'S OWN"

PREVIOUSLY



PART ONE OF FOUR

In London, COURTNEY ROSS, Chief Executive of Fraser's Bank and newly-crowned White Queen of the infamous Hellfire Club, sets in motion a clandestine plot to destabilize and "acquire" for her very own the East African island nation of Zanzibar.

To achieve that goal, her agent, VIPER, engaged the services of an African mercenary cadre, the WEAPONEERS. Opposing them are two members of the X-Men: billionaire industrialist and philanthropist WARREN WORTHINGTON III (ARCHANGEL) and his sweetheart, PAIGE GUTHRIE (HUSK), plus the country's President—JONO BARAKA (a long-retired super hero, the legendary ASKARI).

The mutants of nearby Genosha, acting as good neighbors, decide to intervene.



PART TWO OF FOUR

CALLISTO, KARIMA SHAPANDAR, and SHOLA INKOSE are teleported to the mainland by the young mutant HUB, where they immediately engage the invaders. Archangel, Callisto and Viper are caught in an exploding aerial minefield, their fate unknown. Seeking additional aid and reinforcements, the rest accompany Askari to the villa of his trusted friend and vice-president, GENERAL UMBAJA.

But Umbaja has betrayed them.

Meanwhile, MAGNETO keeps CHARLES XAVIER ignorant of these tumultuous events. His only goal is to find a means to save the sanity and life of his beloved daughter, WANDA MAXIMOFF (the SCARLET WITCH.) For him, nothing else matters, regardless of the ultimate cost.

ZANZIBAR

I MAKE
THIS
OFFER
ONCE.

BE SENSIBLE.
YOU ARE QUITE
SURROUNDED.
YOUR POSITION
IS UTTERLY
HOPELESS.

AND I
ASSURE
YOU, AT THE
FIRST SIGN OF
RESISTANCE,
GENERAL
UMBABA'S
DAUGHTER
WILL PAY THE
ULTIMATE
PRICE.

I
KNOW
YOU.

FROM INTERPOL
BULLETINS.

YOUR
CODENAME IS
SCIMITAR.

A TERRORIST-FOR-HIRE, WANTED
IN OVER A SCORE OF NATIONS, WHOSE
REPUTATION IS FOR RUTHLESSNESS
AND CRUELTY.

FORGIVE
ME, JONO,
BUT I'VE SEEN
FIRST-HAND
WHAT HE
CAN DO.

I CANNOT
RISK MY
DAUGHTER'S
LIFE.

I
UNDERSTAND,
MY FRIEND.

THE WORLD IS MINE!

Harper
Presents
X-CALIBUR

By Chris
Claremont
& Aaron
Lopresti

BUT BY THE
SAME TOKEN,
YOU MUST
UNDERSTAND...

...THAT I
WILL NEVER
SACRIFICE OUR
COUNTRY'S
FREEDOM!

Greg Adams
inker
Tom Orzechowski
letterer
Avalon's Rob Ro
colorist
Molly Tazer
asst. editor
Stephanie Moore
editor
Tom Brevoort
supervising editor
Joe Quesada
editor in chief
Dan Buckley
publisher

ZARRGH!



NICE THING ABOUT BEING SURROUNDED, ASKARI?

WE DON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT SHOOTING OUR OWN BY MISTAKE.

DOESN'T SEEM TO BOTHER THE WEAPONEERS MUCH EITHER, I'M AFRAID, KARIMA.

THE CYBORG IS THE PRIMARY THREAT.

SHE'S SPROUTING WEAPONS FROM ALL OVER HER BODY. SHE'S A ONE-WOMAN ARMY!

VOLLEY FIRE, THEN TAKE COVER!

AT LEAST SHE CAN'T REACH US BEHIND THIS WALL.

phuttha
phuttha
phuttha
phuttha
phuttha

TAG
TAG
TAG
TAG
TAG
TAG
TAG

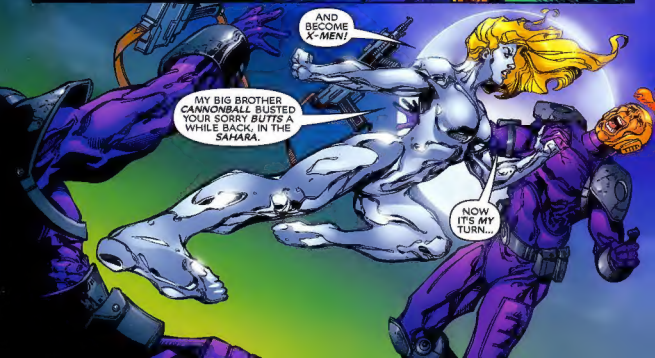
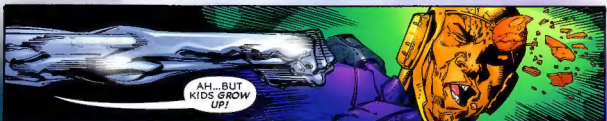
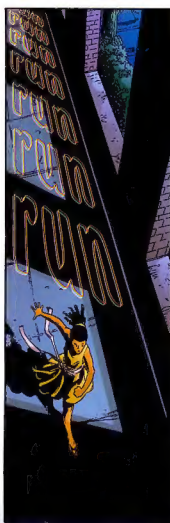
YEEK!

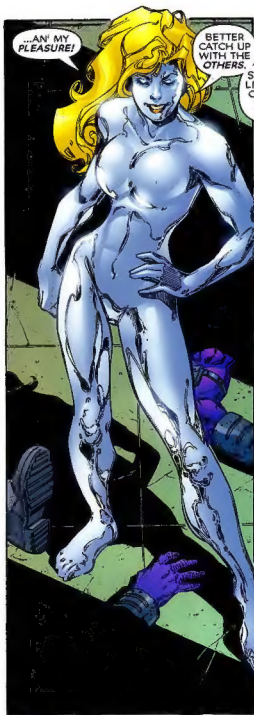
WHEW!

KR
ONK!



BOOM!





...AN' MY PLEASURE!

BETTER CATCH UP WITH THE OTHERS.

SOUNDS LIKE THEY CAN USE SOME HELP.



MS. X-MAN--

--THE SWORDMASTER HAS COME FOR YOU!



COME NOW, DID YOU REALLY THINK IT WAS GOING TO BE THIS EASY?

OF COURSE!



READ THE BRIEFING BOOK ON YOU, SCIMITAR.

FIRST TIME OUT, IRON FIST CLEANED YOUR CLOCK!



TRUE-- WHEN WE FOUGHT IN LONDON.

I WAS YOUNG.

HE WAS LUCKY.

IN THE YEARS SINCE, I HAVE MORE PROPERLY LEARNED MY CRAFT.

?

CAN
YOU SAY
THE
SAME?

TRAMMP!

YOU CUT
THROUGH MY
ARMOR!

BUT THAT'S
IMPOSSIBLE!

DEAR GIRL,
THAT'S BUT THE
HALF OF IT.

YOU SEE, **HUSK**,
THE WEAPONERS
HAVE COMPILED
QUITE AN EXTENSIVE
BRIEFING BOOK
ON THE X-MEN.

DOCUMENTING
THE FULL EXTENT
OF YOUR MUTANT
ABILITIES...

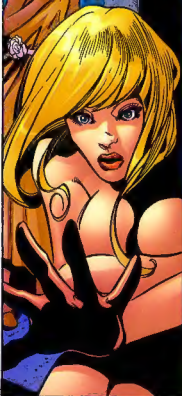
...AND
HOW BEST TO
DEFEAT
THEM.

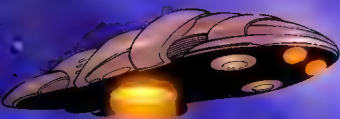
BEST
OF ALL,
SHAMELESS
CREATURE,
BY FORCING
A **SKIN-
CHANGE**
UPON
YOU...

...THE
SHOCK
LEAVES YOU
UNABLE TO
INITIATE
ANOTHER
FOR QUITE
SOME
TIME.

WHO'S
LAUGHING
NOW, EH?

FLASH!





SHIELDS ARE HOLDING, COMMANDER, WE'RE SECURE FROM DIRECT ATTACK

MAIN WEAPONS REMAIN OFF-LINE

WE'RE MAKING GOOD PROGRESS ON THE CONDUIT CORE, BUT WE STILL CAN'T TELEPORT HOME.

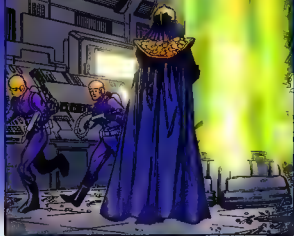
CONTINUE REPAIRS. I WANT AN UPDATE WITHIN THE HOUR.



I TRUST, SCIMITAR, YOU HAVE BETTER NEWS.

VICTORY, COMMANDER.

WE'VE CAPTURED PRESIDENT BARAKA.



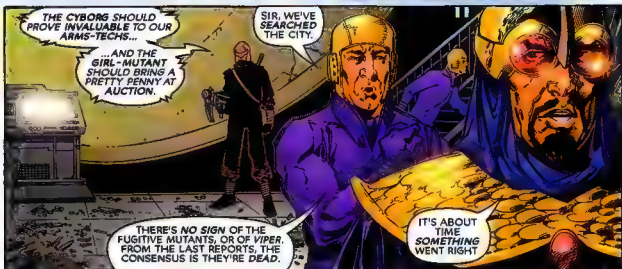
THE CYBORG SHOULD PROVE INVALUABLE TO OUR ARMS-TECHS...

...AND THE GIRL-MUTANT SHOULD BRING A PRETTY PENNY AT AUCTION.

SIR, WE'VE SEARCHED THE CITY.

THERE'S NO SIGN OF THE FUGITIVE MUTANTS, OR OF VIPER. FROM THE LAST REPORTS, THE CONSENSUS IS THEY'RE DEAD.

IT'S ABOUT TIME SOMETHING WENT RIGHT



"BUT JUST TO BE SAFE, MAINTAIN PATROLS.

"I'LL FEEL SO MUCH BETTER WHEN I BEHOLD THEIR BODIES."

YOU HAVE GOT TO BE KIDDING ME!





WE'RE BURIED ALIVE
UNDER LORD ONLY KNOWS
HOW MUCH RUBBLE. I'M
STUCK HOLDING UP THE
FLAMIN' ROOF...

...AND ALL YOU
TWO CAN THINK ABOUT IS
SQUARING OFF LIKE A COUPLE
OF MACHO GUNFIGHTERS
AT HIGH NOON?

I'M SUPPOSED
TO BE THE ONE
WITH THE
TESTOSTERONE
HERE, LADIES

HE'S
MINE!

REALITY CHECK,
LADIES: I'M HOLDING
THE KEYSTONE OF
THIS PILE IN PLACE--
JUST BARELY!

ONE LITTLE
SLIP FROM
ME, THE ROOF
COLLAPSES--



--WE GET
SQUISHED

OH, DON'T BE SO
MELODRAMATIC

YOU
KNOW,
YOU
SHOULD
BE ON
MY
SIDE

AFTER
ALL, WHEN
YOU FIRST MET,
DIDN'T CALLISTO
HAVE YOU
CRUCIFIED?

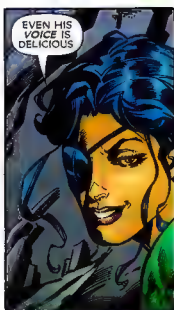
AND HOW OFTEN
HAVE YOU TRIED TO
KILL THE X-MEN,
VIPER?

LAST TIME,
DIDN'T THAT
ALMOST INCLUDE
NUKING
LONDON?

NOT TO MENTION--
HELLO--
BEING PART OF
THIS VERY
INVASION?



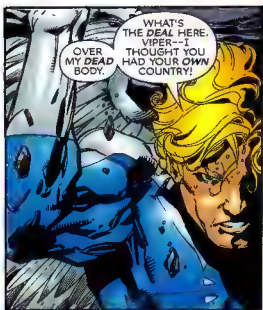
GIMME
A BREAK,
WILL YA?



EVEN HIS
VOICE IS
DELICIOUS



COULD
WE
SHARE?



WHAT'S
THE DEAL HERE,
VIPER-- I
THOUGHT YOU
HAD YOUR OWN
COUNTRY!

OVER
MY DEAD
BODY.



RULING IS BORING. CONQUEST
IS THE FUN PART.

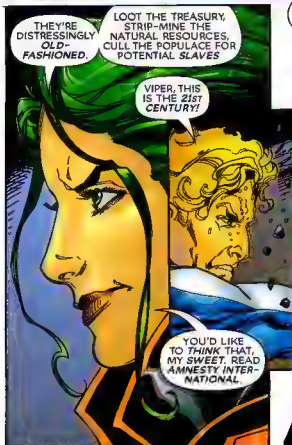
MY HEART
BLEEDS.

LITTLE
BACKWATER
LIKE THIS,
HARDLY
SEEMS
WORTH THE
EFFORT

HIDDEN
TREASURES,
MY
DARLING

TAKE WINGS OFF YOUR
LIST, YOU SLAG!

WHAT ABOUT
THESE SO-CALLED
WEAPONEERS?



THEY'RE
DISTRESSINGLY
OLD-
FASHIONED.

LOOT THE TREASURY,
STRIP-MINE THE
NATURAL RESOURCES,
CULL THE POPULACE FOR
POTENTIAL SLAVES

VIPER, THIS
IS THE 21ST
CENTURY!

YOU'D LIKE
TO THINK THAT,
MY SWEET. READ
AMNESTY INTER-
NATIONAL



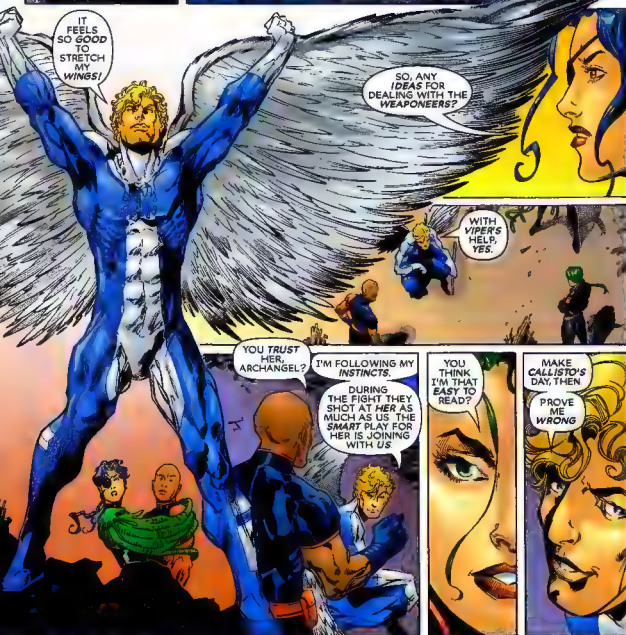
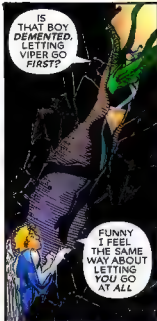
TO HECK
WITH THAT, READ
HISTORY!

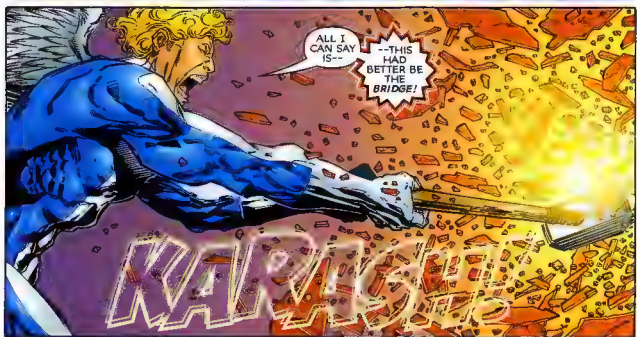
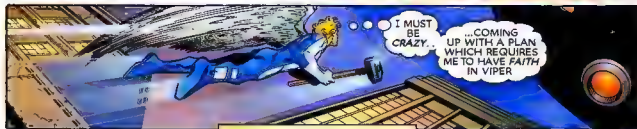
WHEN AMERICA WAS BUILT
BY SLAVES, LIFE WAS CHEAP,
MANUAL LABOR AS EASILY
TRAINED AS REPLACED.

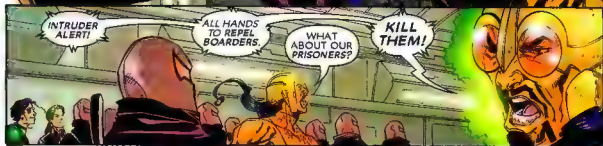
TODAY,
MUTANTS ARE
RECREATING
THE SAME
EQUATION.

WHO NEEDS
A WORK CREW, OR
EVEN CONSTRUCTION
EQUIPMENT, WHEN THE
RIGHT MUTANT CAN
BUILD YOU A
SKYSCRAPER SINGLE-
HANDED, OR TEAR ONE
DOWN, SINGLE-
HANDED?!

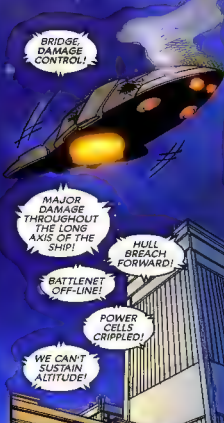












BRIDGE,
DAMAGE
CONTROL!

MAJOR
DAMAGE
THROUGHOUT
THE LONG
AXIS OF THE
SHIP!

BATTLETNET
OFF-LINE!

POWER
CELLS
CRIPPLED!

WE CAN'T
SUSTAIN
ALTITUDE!

HULL
BREACH
FORWARD!



YOUR ASSAULT
BARGE IS A WRECK,
COMMANDER. YOUR
INVASION'S OVER.

THE ONLY
QUESTION IS
THE NUMBER OF
WEAPONER
CASUALTIES.

STARTING
WITH YOU!



I--
YIELD!

MAKE IT
OFFICIAL.

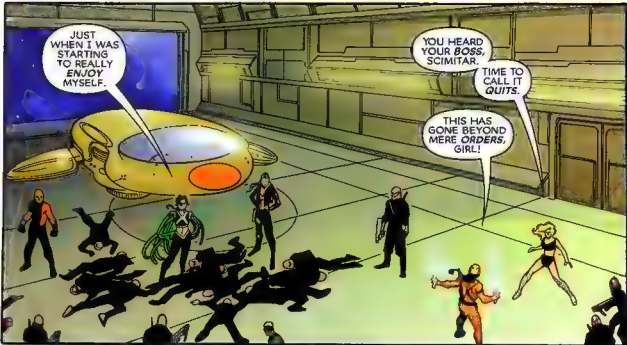


THIS IS THE
COMMANDER.

MY
WEAPONERS,
THE DAY IS
LOST

LAY DOWN
YOUR
WEAPONS. THE
ORDER IS
SURRENDER.

BUMMER!

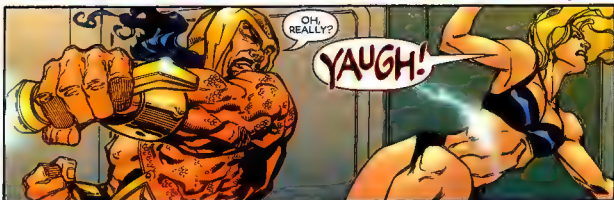
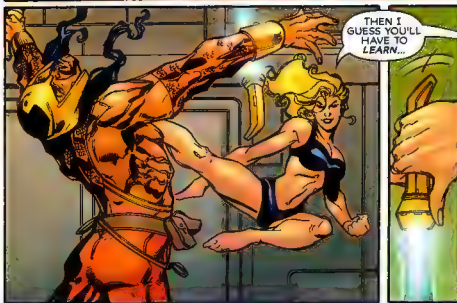


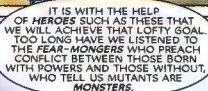
JUST
WHEN I WAS
STARTING TO
REALLY
ENJOY
MYSELF.

YOU HEARD
YOUR BOSS,
SCIMITAR.

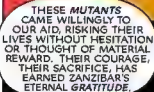
TIME TO
CALL IT
QUITS.

THIS HAS
GONE BEYOND
MERE ORDERS,
GIRL!





THE WEAPONEERS
ARE SECURELY UNDER GUARD
AND WE BELIEVE IT IS ONLY A
MATTER OF TIME BEFORE THE
LOCATION OF THEIR HOME BASE
IS DISCOVERED AND THE THREAT
THEY POSE TO THE PEACEFUL
NATIONS OF THIS CONTINENT
ENDED FOREVER.



FROM THIS BEGINNING,
LET US ALL STRIVE TO BUILD
EVEN MORE BRIDGES BETWEEN
OUR PEOPLES. THEY HAVE EARNED
OUR **RESPECT**. LET US PROVE
OURSELVES **WORTHY**
OF THEIRS.



GGRRRR



JEALOUS?

NOT
ONCE I RIP
OUT HER
HEART

PAIGE,
BE COOL
I CAN
HANDLE
HER

I KNOW.

BUT WHERE I COME FROM, MUSCLING IN ON A GAL'S GUY CAN START A FEUD.

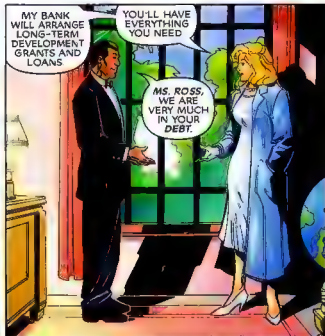
AND WE
TAKE OUR FEUDS
SERIOUSLY.

**VIPER'S
CONSPICUOUS
BY HER
ABSENCE.**

WONDER
WHAT *THAT'S*
ALL ABOUT?



VICE-PRESIDENT UMBAJA, WE HAVE A DEAL.



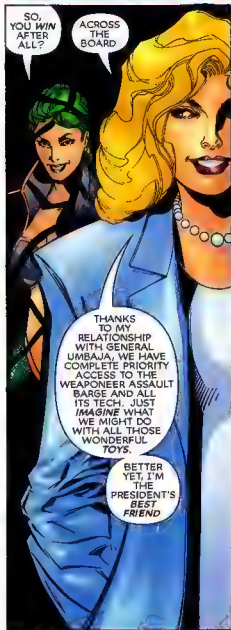
MY BANK WILL ARRANGE LONG-TERM DEVELOPMENT GRANTS AND LOANS

YOU'LL HAVE EVERYTHING YOU NEED

MS. ROSS, WE ARE VERY MUCH IN YOUR DEBT.



MUSIC TO A BANKER'S EARS

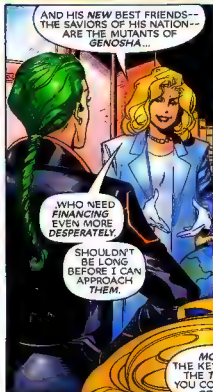


SO, YOU WIN AFTER ALL?

ACROSS THE BOARD

THANKS TO MY RELATIONSHIP WITH GENERAL UMBAJA, WE HAVE COMPLETE PRIORITY ACCESS TO THE WEAPONER ASSAULT BARGE AND ALL ITS TECH. JUST IMAGINE WHAT WE MIGHT DO WITH ALL THOSE WONDERFUL TOYS.

BETTER YET, I'M THE PRESIDENT'S BEST FRIEND



AND HIS NEW BEST FRIENDS-- THE SAVIORS OF HIS NATION-- ARE THE MUTANTS OF GENOSHA...

WHO NEED FINANCING EVEN MORE DESPERATELY

SHOULDN'T BE LONG BEFORE I CAN APPROACH THEM.



SEE HOW EASILY THE DOMINOS FALL.

YOUR WAY WAS CERTAINLY WORTH THE TRY, VIPER

MINE IS BETTER

MONEY'S THE KEY. CONTROL THE TREASURY, YOU CONTROL THE COUNTRY.



AND WITH CONTROL OF GENOSHA...

...I CAN LAY CLAIM TO THE WORLD!

GREENWICH
VILLAGE

THE HOME OF DR.
STEPHEN STRANGE,
EARTH'S SORCERER
SUPREME...

NOK
NOK NOK

I'LL GET
IT, WONG,
THANK
YOU.

AS YOU
WISH,
DOCTOR.

WHO
WOULD BE
CALLING AT SUCH
AN HOUR, ON SUCH
A DREADFUL
NIGHT?

A
COLLEAGUE,
A VERY OLD
FRIEND.

AND WHOSE
NEED IS AS
URGENT AS IT IS
DESPERATE.

STEPHEN--
HELP ME!

WHO'S COME
A VERY LONG
WAY.

VERY IMPRESSIVE, PROJECTING
YOUR ASTRAL FORM HALFWAY
AROUND THE GLOBE.

EVER SINCE
I MOVED TO
GENOSHA, I'VE
BEEN GAINING
STRENGTH.

I'M STARTING
TO SUSPECT THAT
ISN'T A
COINCIDENCE.

SIX MONTHS
I'VE BEEN
TREATING WANDA
MAXIMOFF. I'M
NO CLOSER TO A
SOLUTION NOW
THAN WHEN
I STARTED.

I DID
WARN
YOU.

MY
PROVINCE
IS THE MIND,
STEPHEN. SHE
NEEDS SO MUCH
MORE. THIS
CASE IS JUST
AS MUCH A
MATTER OF
THE SPIRIT.

AND
NOT
JUST
HERS.

I BEG YOUR
PARDON?



CHARLES, YOUR PATIENT IS A WOMAN WHOSE POWER CAN REORDER PHYSICAL CAUSALITY.

HER FATHER WIELDS ONE OF THE FOUNDATION FORCES OF CREATION.

HOW CAN YOU, EARTH'S GREATEST TELEPATH, NOT HELP BUT BE AFFECTED BY THEIR INTERACTION--

--ESPECIALLY SINCE THEIR MOTIVATION SPRINGS FROM THE NOBLEST OF EMOTIONS, LOVE!

ARE YOU SAYING I'M LETTING MYSELF BE SIDE-TRACKED?

EACH OF YOU BRINGS YOUR OWN CONSIDERABLE BAGGAGE TO THE TABLE.

FORGIVE ME, OLD FRIEND, BUT WANDA ISN'T THE ONLY ONE IN PAIN.



I'D GIVE ANYTHING RIGHT NOW TO BE MY STEP-BROTHER, AND ONLY HAVE TO DEAL WITH THE WORLD BY HITTING THINGS.



WANDA CANNOT BE ADDRESSED IN ISOLATION.



TO HEAL ONE, YOU MUST ATTEMPT TO HEAL ALL, INCLUDING, CHARLES, YOURSELF.



I'M FINE.

OF COURSE YOU ARE.

GREAT POWER, CHARLES-- GREAT RESPONSIBILITY.



AS YOU TAUGHT YOUR STUDENTS, SO MUST YOU LEARN FOR YOURSELF.



STEPHEN,
I DON'T
KNOW
WHERE TO
BEGIN.

YOU'VE
JUST ASKED
THE RIGHT
QUESTION.

LET'S
GET TO
WORK!

Next:
**THE
END
OF THE
WORLD
AS WE
KNOW
IT!**

SWORD STROKES

Welcome back, folks! We've got a special treat for you in this edition of *Sword Strokes*—a few pages from the forthcoming EXCALIBUR #14, shown prior to the inking and coloring stages in order to display the brilliant penciling work of Aaron Lopresti! But first, a couple of your letters...

Dear Marvel,

Thank you for bringing back Sugar Man and, uh, killing him. I loved this character and was wondering why he didn't pop up yet, since Genosha is his home.

This book is great in that, so far, it is more one long story than many short ones. It will be fun to watch Genosha grow under this crew. Lopresti's artwork really sells it, too. But really, what's up with Magneto?

So just bring Holocaust and the Exiles over and make the AOA visits complete. I'm so glad Dark Beast is back as a front character. He's so much fun. Well, keep up the good work, man. I love this book!

Chris Pitts
Oklahoma

That's what we like to hear, Chris! As for what's up with Magneto...well, all we can say is hold on to your hat for the next few months, and don't miss this summer's HOUSE OF M crossover event.

Hi guys,

I hadn't been a regular fan of EXCALIBUR until I picked up a trade paperback at my comic store, featuring the collection of EXCALIBUR #1-#4, and I have to say, I'm pretty excited by the addition of the new characters—in particular, Wicked. She seems to have a different power than most other new mutants of late, so please, I'd like to see more of her, either in EXCALIBUR or other X-Men series. And also, whatever happened to Lifeguard of X-TREME X-MEN? Last I heard, she went off with Thunderbird (Neal Shaara) to look for her brother, Slipstream. Will there be more news about her current adventures, or will she remain on the dusty shelves of X-characters in the near future?

Thanks heaps,
Don Woo
Singapore

We're glad you like Wicked, Don! We like her, too. Her mutant power isn't quite what you think, though...and we think you'll be pretty blown away when you find out what it really is.

Lifeguard and Thunderbird both appeared in EXCALIBUR #5, so check out that issue to see what they've been up to. They're currently working for a branch of X-Corp located in India. Lifeguard is also currently appearing in Chris Claremont and Sean Chen's future tale of the X-Men's final days, X-MEN: THE END — HEROES AND MARTYRS.

That's it for now! In just a couple of weeks, be sure to return for the final chapter of "The Devil's Own", in which Dr. Strange and Professor X take a dangerous journey from which they may not return! And what could be more dangerous than a journey into the dark recesses of the mind? You won't want to miss it, folks—this is the EXCALIBUR issue they'll be talking about for years to come!



NEXT ISSUE:



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**HOUSE OF M
PRELUDE,
PART 2!**